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FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9478
INFO RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 3429
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 8904
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE 1048
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 1715
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 002773

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/12/2015

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [NP](#)

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS DAY PROTEST INTO RESTRICTED AREA

Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty. Reasons 1.4(b/d).

Protests, and Arrests, Non-Violent

¶1. (C) The Citizens Movement for Peace and Democracy (CMPD) organized a demonstration in Kathmandu to mark International Human Rights Day on December 10. The organizers announced their intention to enter into a restricted area in the center of Kathmandu as part of their call for the restoration of peace and democracy, and as they attempted to do so, police intervened. Krishna Pahadi, one of CMPD's founders, confirmed that police arrested 97 people and released them all that evening. He explained that it was "natural for them to get arrested, as they had ventured into the restricted area." Devendra Raj Pandey, another CMPD co-founder, agreed.

Pandey noted that the police had used water cannons, not batons, to disperse the crowd, estimated by Pahadi to be over 1,000. Pandey added that the policemen were not aggressive, and Pahadi said that the police did not mistreat anybody after the arrests. Pandey also commented that the rally was "a good gathering" of intellectuals.

HMGN Claims to Protect Human Rights

¶12. (C) Vice-Chairman Kirti Nidhi Bista, in remarks at a separate International Human Rights Day event organized by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), said that the government had made "continuous efforts" to protect the human rights guaranteed by Nepal's Constitution. He asserted, despite recent statements by NHRC's Chairman Khatri to the contrary, the government had been implementing NHRC's recommendations. Bista explained that His Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMGN) had also "established human rights units in most of the ministries to make all government agencies responsible to protect and promote human rights." However, NHRC protection officer Madhav Gautam told Emboff that the only ministry that had a human rights unit was the Home Ministry.

Comment

¶13. (C) Although the two largest English-language daily papers front-paged the Human Rights Day arrests, the two main organizers of the protest were sanguine about the day's events; they had expected to be arrested for entering restricted areas. They received good coverage, and those arrested were quickly released.

MORIARTY